

Edgefield Advertiser.

THOS. J. ADAMS, PROPRIETOR

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BRANDING TEXAS STEERS.

HARDEST PIECE OF WORK IN THE COW BUSINESS.

Duties of the Ropers, Bulldozers and Punchers—A Queer Thing About Brands.

"WHAT is the hardest piece of work that a man in the cow business ever has to do?"

"Well," remarked Joseph Keith, of Belcherville, Texas, who certainly has been at the business long enough to know what he is talking about, "there are many things that he has to do that haven't much fun in them. Standing guard in the rain or riding round 'em on a dark night would neither one be considered a picnic by most people, but when it comes right down to sweating and tugging and good old hard work, I believe branding beats any job I ever tackled."

Perhaps the reader may be, as I was, a little inclined to wonder how the mere making of marks on a cow's hide can involve any really hard manual labor; but if he once learns the details of the process all wonder on this point will cease. He will learn, furthermore, that it requires not only muscular strength, but experience and courage and brains. The average hard-working Missouri farmer would find it about as hard to make a success of branding cattle in Texas as at building ships in Maine.

Of course, in order to brand cattle one must have the proper tools. Branding irons are of two kinds—stamping irons and dotting irons. The former consists of a wrought-iron stamp containing all the characters in the brand. For instance, if the brand were X T, there would be an iron stamp composed of these three letters, with an iron handle running back from some convenient point, and the handle of the T. These stamps were formerly much in use, but have now become almost completely abandoned, except among the very largest outfits. Their place has been taken by the dotting irons, which consist merely of a straight iron rod and a half circle with a long handle attached. With these two implements any letter in the alphabet can be made, and an astonishingly large variety of other characters as well. For instance, the letter B can be made in such a way that the reader can easily understand how the X T outfit makes its brand by five applications of the straight rod. "B" requires one application of the straight rod and two of the half circle. This may not make a very beautiful B, but it makes one which any child that knows its letters would be apt to recognize. If more elaborate designs are wanted, the simple dotting irons are found sufficient to produce them. The straight rod is generally about a yard long, and has a ring in the handle end. The handle to the half circle is about the same length. They are generally heated in a brick fire on the open prairie, though on the large ranches there is sometimes a furnace built especially for the purpose.

For branding any class of cattle properly at least four men are required. Of these four, one is the roper, two are bulldozers, and the fourth is the puncher. As I am writing in the English language, I take it for granted that my English-speaking readers all have a perfectly accurate idea of what these words mean. Of course, we all know that a roper is one who ropes. If necessary, one man can do all the roping required, but two men do better. The roper throws his lariat around the neck of some animal to be branded, and then, by the main strength of his horse, hauls it up with in a reasonable distance of the fire. The horse he rides is called the cutting horse. He is called the cutting horse, not because he can cut, but because he is used in cutting out cattle from the herd. Some idea of the hardness of the work may be derived from the fact that during the branding season each roper is allowed from ten to twelve horses for his own individual use.

When the roper has driven and dragged the steer to be branded to the usual place, he turns him over to the bulldozers. Usually, there is only one bulldozer, he plants his knees squarely in the flanks of his prostrate victim, passes the animal's tail back between its legs, and grips it firmly with both hands. It might be well for the reader to remember this the next time he wants to hold a vicious cow down. The attitude may not be a very graceful one, but it gives the man a death-like grip on the brute. The horns may toss viciously as the fast-paced puncher approaches, but as long as the grip on the tail holds the hinder quarters stay close to the ground. It is hard on the cow, but it is also hard on the muscular strength of the man who does the holding. For this reason the bulldozers generally work in pairs. One of them takes the grip just described, while the other one grasps a fore foot of the animal in each hand, and in the fervor of a double handshake. When it is a colt that is being branded, the attitude is varied. One man holds the head down, or sits on it, while the other sits down flat on the ground and grasps the upper one of its hind legs firmly in both hands. One might think that for two men to hold a calf down is not very hard work, but when it comes to doing so for four or five hours the work becomes exhausting. Even at best the bulldozer's position lacks a great deal of being a sinecure.

The time of year when most cattle are branded is in the spring or fall. Most of the calves are of similar age in the fall, but for grow cattle the spring is preferred, because they shed most of their superfluous hair then. Calves are branded any time after they are two weeks old, but from three to six months is the usual age. Stock men say that a full yearling is the hardest animal they have to brand. If any man thinks one just let him try to hold one down. There is one peculiar

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Another one of the train wreckers on the Short Cut has been arrested and has been lodged in jail at Florence. His name is James Leno. It is to be hoped the whole gang will be caught soon, and that a good term in the penitentiary will be the portion of each one of them.

People generally are wondering when the metropolitan police thum-screws are to be applied, or if they are to be applied at all. Those nearest the governor express the opinion that he does not wish to put the law in operation at all, and that he will not do so unless he finds that the police of the cities and towns do not do what he conceives to be their duty.

The constables are working up the case of the looting of the dispensary at Lewistown. A telegram has been received stating that two hundred and forty-seven bottles of liquor have been recovered by the state's officers. It is charged that the entire stock of available liquor was taken out of the dispensary and that a good portion of it was found in the yard of an ex-liquor dealer.

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The Dogs of Paris.

Let returns show that Paris has 80,000 registered dogs, or one to every twenty-eight inhabitants. The largest number are in the poorest quarters of the city. It cost \$2,000,000 per annum to feed them, but the dogs in turn afford a living to twenty-five manufacturers of collars and muzzles, four bakers of dog's biscuits, five factories of dog's biscuits, consisting of meat, flour, and salt; three special dog pharmacies, a dozen infirmaries and two dog hospitals. —Chicago Herald.

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FROM WASHINGTON.

NEWSY ITEMS PICKED UP AT THE NATIONAL CAPITOL.

Sayings and Doings of the Official Heads of the Government.

Senator Davis, of Minnesota, a member of the committee on foreign relations, says that the war between China and Japan will result in a great extension of commerce between the United States and both of these countries.

Guarding Against Disease. The commissioner of pensions has issued an order which will prevent clerks in the pension department from practicing medicine while on duty. The order states that if any clerk or employee of the pension bureau shall attend patients as a physician or medical advisor it will be regarded as sufficient ground for removal from the bureau. The danger of bringing contagious diseases to the other clerks is too great, so the commissioner thinks. Moreover, it is calling likely to keep the clerks and employees up at night and thus unfit them for work during the day.

Wanted Carlie's Scalp. Inkblings of an unusually sensational story leaked out at Washington Wednesday. The story, too, has many of the earmarks of verity. It relates to Secretary Carlisle and the rumors of his removal published recently by the New York newspapers, and comes from a southern congressman, who gives Secretary Carlisle himself as his informant. It seems that on Monday Secretary Carlisle, called on by Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, the big New York banker, called on the president. He, it is alleged, made a formal demand upon the president that Secretary Carlisle's resignation be asked for. He presented also a letter from the heads of many of the strongest financial institutions in New York.

He informed the president that, in case this was not done, the administration, instead of securing the aid of the New York bankers, would meet with their opposition. President Cleveland, it is reported, politely but firmly assured Mr. Morgan that he would not ask for Mr. Carlisle's resignation, but, on the contrary, he told him that Mr. Carlisle was making a splendid official, satisfying both the country and the administration, and instead of requesting his resignation, he intended to back him up in his financial plans to the fullest extent of his power. Mr. Morgan is said to have returned to New York in high dudgeon.

The dissatisfaction over Mr. Carlisle's removal over the head of the New York bankers, entered upon the duties of his position and so did the new coroners. Conditions for the new officials will be somewhat different from those that have prevailed heretofore. Under the new state legislation every species of gambling is prohibited and classed as a criminal offense. Rumors of intended resignations of many officials in the city departments are rife, but it is generally believed that the men in possession of these very coveted places will hold on until they see whether a power of removal bill will be passed at Albany.

THE SENATE. The senate re-assembled at noon Thursday after the holiday recess of about ten days. About thirty senators were present when Vice-president Stewart called the body to order and more came in during the reading of the journal. Mr. Quay, of Pennsylvania, introduced his proposed amendment to the urgency deficiency bill, amending the tariff law by striking out all provisions for an income tax and substituting a new woolen schedule, including a duty on raw wool. At 2:30 o'clock the senate resumed consideration of the Nicaragua canal bill, Senator Morgan speaking. After the presentation of sundry resolutions and memorials, Mr. Sherman, from the committee on foreign affairs, reported, and the senate passed the resolution heretofore introduced by Mr. Lodge, of Massachusetts, calling on the president for the correspondence and other papers relative to the delivery of the United States consul at Shanghai of two Japanese prisoners to the Chinese authorities.

THE CONGRESS.

The Proceedings of Both Houses Briefly Epitomized.

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